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What is claimed is:

1. A method for reversing a cancerous phenotype of a melanoma cell which comprises introducing a nucleic acid comprising a melanoma differentiation associated gene (mda-7) into the cell under conditions permitting the expression of the gene so as to thereby reverse the cancerous phenotype of the cell.
2. A method of treating a melanoma in a subject comprising administering to the subject an effective amount of a nucleic acid comprising an mda-7 gene.
3. A method of treating a melanoma in a subject comprising administering to the subject an effective amount of an mda-7 protein.

0991466-1-13404